

Additional Seattle to Portland Amtrak *Cascades* Service – Background

How will Amtrak *Cascades* service increase this summer?

Amtrak *Cascades* service will increase by one additional mid-day round trip between Seattle and Portland with stops in six intermediate communities. The additional round trip will depart Seattle in the late morning, and will depart from Portland in mid-afternoon.

To accommodate the additional round trip, some train schedules will change.

Passengers traveling between communities north and south of Seattle will have a much shorter layover at King Street Station. This layover time for southbound passengers will be reduced from 60 to 25 minutes, and for northbound travelers it will be reduced from 90 to 20 minutes.

Also, day-trippers from the north sound region will have an additional three hours to spend in Seattle for shopping, visiting, or conducting business.

How many Amtrak *Cascades* round trips are there and who funds them?

Amtrak *Cascades* trains are supported and funded by ticket-buying passengers, the states of Washington and Oregon, and Amtrak. WSDOT is funding this service increase.

As of July 1, 2006, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) funds five daily round trips:

- Three Seattle – Portland round trips
- One Seattle – Vancouver, B.C. round trip
- One Seattle – Bellingham round trip

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) funds two daily round trips between Portland and Eugene.

Amtrak funds one daily round trip between Seattle and Portland.

Note: WSDOT also provides funds for equipment maintenance on state-owned trainsets.

Will the increase in service shorten travel times between Seattle and Portland?

No, the travel time between Seattle and Portland remains at approximately 3 hours and 30 minutes.

Will the increase in service benefit other travelers?

Yes, although travel time will remain about the same, there will be shorter total trip times for some passengers through Seattle.

	<i>Current Schedule</i>	<i>New Schedule</i>
Bellingham - Portland	<i>6 hours, 50 mins.</i>	6 hours, 25 mins.
Portland - Bellingham	<i>7 hours, 25 mins.</i>	6 hours, 15 mins.

Why increase Amtrak *Cascades* service now?

WSDOT-sponsored Amtrak service has experienced 11 consecutive years of record ridership since the start of service in 1994. The Washington State Legislature provided WSDOT funding through the 2005 Transportation Partnership Account to increase service.

When was the last time more trains were added to the Amtrak *Cascades* schedule?

- In 1999 a Bellingham to Seattle round trip was added (funded by WSDOT).
- In 2000 a second Portland to Eugene round trip was added (funded by ODOT).

Will new train equipment be needed for the increased service?

No. Existing Amtrak *Cascades* train equipment will be used.

Who owns the Amtrak *Cascades* train equipment?

WSDOT owns three trainsets, and Amtrak owns two.

How and when did WSDOT-sponsored Amtrak service begin?

In 1993 the Washington State Legislature created Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 47.79 directing WSDOT to develop intercity passenger rail service through incremental upgrading of the existing service.

In 1994 WSDOT began funding Amtrak service between Seattle and Portland.

In 1995 WSDOT began funding service between Seattle and Vancouver, British Columbia.